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Directions: Fish & Wildlife News - January 24, 1996

Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife

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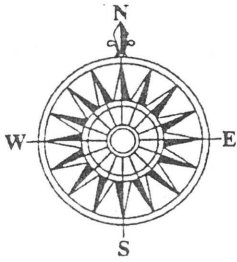
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DIRECTIONS

Fish & Wildlife News

LIBRARY USE ONLY January 24, 1996

Volume 2, No. 1

Who's Who

Connie Latno

Connie joined the Licensing Division as Miscellaneous License Clerk in 1989. Connie handles the administrative duties for the Guides Boards, the Whitewater Guide Board and the Taxidermy Board. She also processes complimentary licenses for disabled veterans and paraplegic and mentally handicapped; camp trip leaders, wildlife propagators, bait dealers, hide dealers, coyote night hunting, commercial boat operators, sellers of inland fish, group home fishing, wildlife exhibitors, commercial shooting areas, etc. Whew! She is also one of the few people in the department who speaks French.

This keeps her very busy at work, and during her leisure time she enjoys knitting and watching the Red Sox and Celtics. Connie has two children, two grandchildren, and her dog Lady.

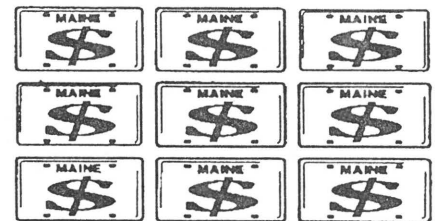


IF&W to Reap Big \$ From Wildlife Lottery

Outdoor Heritage Fund



Match 3 like Amounts, WIN THAT AMOUNT.
Match 2 like Amounts plus a "J", WIN DOUBLE THAT AMOUNT.



WIN UP TO \$3,000

000

The first Maine instant lottery game dedicated to raising funds for the management of wildlife, parks, and public lands - habitat protection - and conservation law enforcement will go on sale in early January. The first game is patterned after the very successful "Loon Plate." Four million tickets are being printed and distributed to over 1,600 lottery sales agents across the state. Each \$1.00 ticket sold will generate approximately 25 cents for conservation projects. Once this game is sold out (2 to 6 months according to demand), it will be replaced by a new Outdoor Heritage

Game which is in the early design stage. An anticipated \$2 to \$4 million dollars will be generated annually. These funds will be allocated to specific conservation projects in accordance with a plan to be developed by the Outdoor Heritage Fund Board. The board will be formally established in the very near future. It's not too early to begin thinking of potential projects. Funding applications will likely be accepted by the board as early as next summer. If you have any ideas for future game themes contact Fred Hurley.

- Fred Hurley



The January full moon was called the Hunger Moon by Native American Indians—the hardest time of the year for people and for wildlife.

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DEC 09 1999

Bucky's Bullets

■ **Hatchery Bond Issue Back For Another Try.** A 5 million dollar bond issue to improve and expand production at our hatcheries is again before the Legislature. Last year we asked that this proposal be delayed until we could be better organized to develop adequate support for the effort. This year it is a go and hopefully will show up on November's ballot. After losing a close vote over a \$10 million proposal in 1994, we needed time to develop a strategy for our hatcheries, which were badly in need of repairs. As Matt notes in a separate article, a number of large Maine companies have offered to help and the Department has committed significant funds for repair. This should take care of our critical repair needs over the next few years. What is needed now are funds to support innovative and new technology to increase production and ensure long term viability of the hatcheries. The bond money would go toward developing new water supplies, improving water quality, acquisition of new combination hatchery and rearing tanks and providing efficient treatment systems. Exciting ideas but we have a lot of work to do if we expect a successful vote in November!

■ **Selected Fisheries Committees to be Formed.** In order to resolve some continuing fishery management issues, I will be appointing two new public department committees. One will deal with Chesuncook Lake. Chesuncook Lake has had an outstanding fishery but is under increasing pressure; which will compromise the quality of the salmon angling if some regulation changes aren't made. I'd personally like to make Chesuncook a model for salmon management to show what we can achieve. Ice fisherman, in particular, have not been keen on some of our ideas. We need to chart a plan and move forward. Finally, in a very different vein, I am asking a group to look at our entire smelt management system. Of all the fisheries, smelt appear to have the most varied clientel and very vocal one at that! We need to revisit this resource and determine how it should be divided among the various users, including the salmon and togue.

■ **Landowner Relations.** Dave Peppard, highlighted in the last Directions, recently revealed that Operation Game Thief (OGT) gave its first award for an illegal dumping case; and trespass convictions were up 5 fold from previous years. These represent new attempts by the Warden Service to deal with issues that concern landowners, and its working! Landowner groups have recently applauded these successes. We hope our efforts will help stem the tide of land posting and assure open space for Maine people to recreate.

Laws and Rules Committee

The Commissioner has formally taken steps to improve the way rule making and statutory proposals are handled by the Department based upon recommendations developed by the Department's Laws and Rules Process Action Team, and endorsed by the Department's Total Quality Management Council.

A new administrative policy was adopted in December establishing the organizational frame work; and procedures to be followed by the various administrative units of the Department in regards to developing rule making and statutory proposals (refer to AP-37). Each unit (Warden Service, Wildlife Division, Fisheries Division, and Administrative Services) will convene a Laws and Rules Committee to review standing regulations, regulatory proposals, and standing statutory requirements. Proposals being considered by an administrative unit's laws and rules

committee will be shared with the other committees. Issues of concern can then be identified and discussed as appropriate before final recommendations are forwarded to the Commissioner for his consideration. Each laws and rules committee will also be expected to conduct an ongoing review of existing statutes and rules, and develop appropriate recommendations for additions, deletions, and modifications as deemed appropriate. A compilation of statutory changes recommended by each unit's laws and rules committee will be submitted to the unit's director in August of each year for review by the Commissioner, and development of the Department's legislative recommendations.

The PAT also recommended that a Department newsletter be published and used to inform Department employees of rule-making and legislative initiatives, the progress of

these actions, and the reasons why these actions are being taken. In response to this recommendation, the Department's editorial board for the newly established newsletter "Directions" will be making every attempt to include this information in future issues to the greatest extent possible.

Lastly, the Commissioner will be establishing a Department Training Committee in response to the recommendations received from both the Training and the Laws and Rules PATs. This committee will be asked, among other things, to develop recommendations regarding a core training curriculum for new employees, as well as one to meet the continuing training needs of all Department employees. An important component of the training programs will be the rule making and legislative process, and associated requirements and procedures.

- Fred Hurley

WHAT'S NEW

Internal Communications Update

Many of the recommendations generated by the Internal Communications PAT have either been implemented or are in various stages of implementation.

The monthly newsletter is a done deal. All press releases are being disseminated - in advance when possible - to regional supervisors who are making sure they get to the troops.

The computer committee is working on a timetable for assuring that all regional offices have modem access to the Augusta data base.

The Commissioner is working with the IF&W Task Force to secure special appropriations that will assist Department in getting E-Mail up to speed.

Tom Collins is formulating a Standard Operating Procedure for better management on departmental bulletin boards.

- V. Paul Reynolds

Training Committee

The Department's TQM Council has received the final report from the PAT on IF&W Training. The following events can be expected in the near future:

- Establishing an Administrative Policy on training to include the Department's level of participation in an employee's continuing education efforts, a core curriculum for new employees and a program for training needs that cross bureau lines.
- Appointing a departmental training coordinator
- Establishing a Departmental Training Committee
- Documenting historical records on training and education

The team did a great job and the new policy and curriculums should be very beneficial to our employees.

- Janet Cotnoir



Adopt A Fish Hatchery

Bucky Owen gave me the task of developing a program with the paper industry of Maine to take on a hatchery and provide the station with needed technical advice and in some cases maintenance and capital investments. As Bucky pointed out, James River Corporation became the first to adopt the Cobb Hatchery at Enfield.

This program was developed by meeting with the mill managers, environmental managers and public relations people to discuss the concept; and then provided a tour with Steve Wilson at each hatchery. We reviewed a list of hatchery needs that Steve and his staff developed and gave company representatives a tour of one or more facilities. They then decided which station to adopt and formed their teams to either perform work or provide technical assistance. We allowed them the latitude to decide what they wanted to do and amounts they wanted to spend.

My acquaintance with some of the mill and environmental managers goes back to my days at the DEP. I had many meetings and visits at their mills and facilities. Based on license reviews and my experience with water quality and discharge licenses, I viewed the opportunity to get the mills involved as a challenge to assist Bucky and help the Department. After all, the flow through of water in a hatchery is a micro system of flow through in a paper mill. The only difference is the volume of water used, the amount of waste, and how it is treated for discharge.

We are in need of advice on some of our discharges and many of the environmental managers could provide us with excellent technical assistance. They have technical staff that could provide energy audits, engineering design and labor assistance. Much of this effort was greeted with great enthusiasm by the industries staff and our hatchery staff. This required a great deal of time, coordination and effort on my part to get this going. But once started, it took off with huge support from labor and industry. I can get on with another project.

This initiative comes at a time when innovative ideas need to be brought to the Department, such as volunteerism. We need to reach out and ask. The consensus, in my opinion, is reached through experience in dealing with industry and what they do. After all, we are all part of the problem, thus part of the solution. I felt it was time for the paper industry to come to our aide. When times are challenging, we tend to find creative solutions.

Publicity is the pay-off in this program and industry deserves it. Some of you may feel this is a conflict; however, we do not license these mills nor do we permit their activities. Yes, we do reviews and offer comments but, we are not the regulatory agency. So, let's give them praise, credit and recognition and further our relationships. Workers in these mills are the highest paid in Maine and they are, for the most part, people who hunt and fish in this great State of Maine.

The next thing I want to do is to get more of the paper mills in Maine to "Adopt a Facility." We have regional offices and other buildings such as Bangor and Augusta where help could be well used. So, I hope to be in touch with some of you and if you have other ideas, speak up. The staff at our Gray Regional and Division Headquarters have used prisoners help to do outside painting of the building. This is a good move and a way to help.

The "adopt approach" concept has been used for lakes, wildlife, streams and rivers across the country, so it is not a new term. We are looking at problem-solving with public involvement through partnership and cooperation. Being flexible and creative, to me, generates innovative ideas. We need to establish a level of trust and confidence in this new relationship.

Al Hutchinson recently wrote Bucky and I on the idea of MBNA adopting the Bangor Research Facility. Another good one!

- Matt Scott

MORE WHAT'S NEW

Deer: To Feed or Not To Feed

With deepening snows and colder nights, an increasing number of well-meaning Mainers are putting out feed for whitetail deer. Feed outlets report a brisk demand for deer feed. Some regional wildlife biologists say that they have never received so many daily requests for information regarding the feeding of deer.

What's going on? The early snows, the summer drought and the lack of acorns, beechnuts and other high-protein fall forage have all conspired to make it unusually difficult for Maine's deer population to fatten up sufficiently for the prolonged winter. Indications are that some people are concerned about the deer's capacity to survive the deepening snows, while others are intent on protecting their neighborhood shrubbery or ornamental vegetation from hungry deer.

The Department has received numerous inquiries. Among the questions asked are: Is it OK to feed deer? What's the best feed? Is the Department going to initiate a statewide supplemental feeding program? Is there anything that organizations can do?

As with other Fish and Wildlife agencies in the Northeast, Maine's policy with regard to the feeding of our more than 200,000 wintering deer is quite straightforward: **DIF&W does not advocate the supplemental feeding of deer and will not undertake any widespread winter feeding efforts.**

Fish and Wildlife's policy on winter feeding reads in part: "Winter feeding treats a symptom, not a cause. It aggravates a problem that can only be solved through the maintenance of deer population densities in balance with available natural food resources and winter habitat." This policy also states that geography and economics prohibit the use of a massive winter feeding project as part of a structured, long-term deer management program.

Fish and Wildlife Commissioner Ray "Bucky" Owen said, "Although we do not advocate the feeding of deer, we recognize that there are people who have an interest in feeding deer, especially during severe winters. Those who want to feed deer should be aware of some of the implications for the deer and the feeder."

A good understanding of a deer's physiology is needed to ensure that a feeding program doesn't do more harm than good. **You can kill a deer with kindness.** Like cows, deer have chambered stomachs and rely, not on strong digestive juices, but bacteria and one-celled organisms to absorb nutrients into the body. Since it takes a deer's system up to three weeks to adjust to a sudden change in diet, a supplemental feeding program that isn't properly carried out can actually make a wintering deer's survival even tougher once the artificial feed is removed. Artificial feeding before severe winter conditions set in and the continuation of supplemental feeding throughout the winter is vitally important. Artificial feeding sites also trigger a feeding pecking order that result in the smaller, younger deer being denied a feeding opportunity.

In short, a person who buys commercial deer feed needs to be prepared to expend considerable time and expense. (Feeding one deer for an entire season can run upwards of \$200). Anything less is sure to diminish rather than enhance a wintering whitetail's chances of survival. Maine's deer biologist Gerry Lavigne reminds prospective deer feeders of the following points:

- Deer should not be fed vegetable trimmings or any type of hay. These do not contain enough nutrients to sustain deer.
- Deer which have been concentrated around feeders are highly vulnerable to predation from coyotes, dogs and bobcats.
- Winter feeding can "short-stop" deer, forcing them to winter in habitats that cannot naturally sustain them.

There is one measure that can be taken to help wintering deer that may help some, and do so without incurring undo harm or upsetting the deer's natural cycle. That is simply to cut and scatter natural browse. Hardwood tops from maples or poplar, for example, are good. And sprout growth from the stumps will offer additional food later on. Softwoods, such as cedar, are usually better left standing as winter cover rather than cut as browse.

Finally, gardeners and backyard landscapers who feed wintering deer can expect nuisance visits come spring and summer.

PROPOSED BEAR SEASON DATES FOR 1996

General	Aug. 26 - Nov. 30
With Bait	Aug. 26 - Sept. 21
Houdsmen	Sept. 9 - Nov. 1
Trapping	Sept. 22 - Oct. 31

CORRECTION...CORRECTION

Dave Peppards phone # is 287-8091
and fax# 287-8094 (sorry Dave.)

The wrong season date was printed on the first batch of turkey applications. The date was printed as May 1 - 29, 1996 actual date is May 1 -31, 1996. Another 2,000 applications were printed with the correct dates.

STATS-STACK

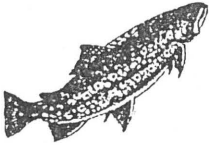
- Hunting in Maine is a \$250 million industry
- Maine's coyote population is estimated to be about 12,000.
- The preliminary deer kill for 1995 is 25, 575.

MORE FIELD NOTES

the-year bass were obtained from each of the 9 waters in late fall. Growth rates will be examined in relation to water temperatures during the next several years.

Warden Service pilots, especially Roger Wolverton, have been conducting numerous flights for us to count anglers on numerous lakes in Hancock County, both summer and winter. Data will be used to estimate the total number of anglers who fish these waters during each season. We greatly appreciate the dependability and diligence of Roger, along with some assistance by Pilots Alan Rider and Jason Bouchard in this important project.

- Rick Jordan



Warden Service Division B

Game Wardens in Division B continued their enforcement efforts on boating violations on Central Maine waters through the Labor Day weekend. Compliance with the Maine Boat Law seems to be much better than at the beginning of the season, when many summons were issued.

The fall hunting season got off to an early start for three Winthrop men when Sgt. Glynn Pratt and K-9 Marcus apprehended them illegally killing ducks in an area beaver flowage during September. Wdn. Dan Murray had a first in the state as he tracked an escaped ostrich across Somerset and Kennebec counties. After receiving numerous complaints of illegal fishing, Wdn. Reggie Hammond was able to apprehend a Hebron man for jigging over his limit of 2- to 4-lb. brook trout out of the Kennebec River this fall.

Wdn. Mark Thompson and Wdn. John Blagdon apprehended two men in unrelated incidents in November for killing bobcat in closed season in Winterport and Washington.

Wdn. John Blagdon, Wdn. Lloyd Perkins, and Wdn. Roland Tilton were able to apprehend a China man for his role in running down a flock of turkeys in Windsor with his truck. The Wardens use of some high tech video enhancement and the participation of OGT brought this case to a rapid conclusion. The media broadcast the home video taken by a Windsor woman of this senseless act and the public was not long in identifying the driver.

Region D Fisheries

NEW BROOK TROUT STRAIN FOR MAINE'S HATCHERIES

The first eggs for a new strain of brook trout to be reared in Maine's hatcheries were taken from the Kennebec River in October. Hatchery Division personnel took 45,000 brook trout eggs from 96 females. This strain, along with one established from Sourdnhunk Lake, is being established to replace existing strains which have become domesticated. Hatchery managers hope to prevent the new strains from becoming domesticated by infusing new genes from wild fish on a periodic basis.

GENETIC ANALYSIS OF MAINE'S WILD BROOK TROUT UNDERWAY

Genetic analysis of Maine's native brook trout populations is being conducted thanks to a partnership between the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife and Trout Unlimited. Samples of native brook trout from three major river drainages - the St. John, the Penobscot, and the Androscoggin - will be analyzed at Laval University this winter to establish the potential of microsatellite DNA analysis to discriminate and establish the extent of inter-drainage genetic diversity of Maine brook trout populations. Trout Unlimited is funding this analysis.

BROOK TROUT PARASITE/ STUDY BEING CONDUCTED

The second year of field work has been completed to study the effects of copepods (gill lice) on Maine's brook trout populations. The study is being conducted in the Pierce Pond area of western Maine. When completed, the study will provide important new information on this parasite's effect on wild trout populations. Areas being investigated include its effect on stocked vs. wild fish and correlation of parasite load to fish size.

- Forrest Bonney

Bio Facts

Owls have excellent hearing, but their ears aren't symmetrically located on their heads—one ear opening is slightly higher than the other. This set-up helps them more accurately pinpoint their next meal.

Great Horned owls are our earliest nesting species, starting to produce and incubate eggs in late January or early February.



VIEWING REMINDER: MAINE FISH AND WILDLIFE MAGAZINE CAN BE SEEN EVERY SATURDAY AT 4 P.M. ON THE STATIONS OF MAINE PUBLIC TELEVISION.

FIELD NOTES

Warden Service Division A

During December of 1993, Division A began an investigation into Fall's Taxidermy at Dixfield, Maine. The business is operated by Vance and Diane Child.

An eight-month investigation of their taxidermy records and an undercover investigation resulted in about a dozen charges being brought against the pair. These charges included: failure to maintain accurate taxidermy records, forgery, tampering with public records, possession of untagged bobcat, falsifying taxidermy records, possession of untagged beaver, coyote, and fox, and illegal possession of flying squirrels and chipmunks. In a plea bargain in Oxford County Superior Court in February 1995, the Dixfield couple paid a \$570 fine and were ordered to repay the Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife \$350 restitution for investigative expenses, for a total of \$920, not including court costs, etc.

In the summer of 1994, then Investigator Tim Peabody asked Investigator Tom Santaguida to take over an investigation of alleged illegal whitewater rafting on the Kennebec and Dead Rivers in Somerset county. Several complaints alleged that Robert Schott of Norway, Maine was charging people to go whitewater rafting without a guide's license through a whitewater rafting organization named the Moxie Gore Paddling club.

After a careful initial investigation, two Game Wardens posing as people interested in going whitewater rafting paid Schott to go whitewater rafting and supposedly join the club.

During February 1995, after further investigation, two search warrants were issued to search Schott's residence and his camp for documents, receipts, whitewater rafting equipment and other evidence pertinent to the investigation.

During the summer of 1995, Mr. Schott was charged with forty (40) counts of violations of the whitewater rafting/guiding rules and laws of Maine. On August 21, 1995 at Skowhegan, the case was settled - the Moxie Gore Paddling club paid a civil penalty of two thousand dollars (\$2,000.) and was also required to formally dissolve itself.

Involved in the investigation were Sgt. Mark Warren, Warden Michelle Belanger, Sgt. Tim Peabody, Lt. Pat Dorian, Wdn. Dan Carroll, Sgt. Chris Simmons, Investigators Dugas, Sargent and Santaguida and at least a dozen other Wardens who assisted with the search warrants and seizure and return of evidence.

Moosehead Region - Fishery Division

In October, Scott, Tim and Paul with assistance from 3 contract personnel, trap netted 10 regional waters. Information from the netting will help guide future management on these and other waters in the region.

Population characteristics and abundance estimates were obtained from 4 wild trout ponds where new regulations will influence the fishery in 1996. The results from 1995 and from future years will help to evaluate the effectiveness of some of the region's quality fishery initiatives.

Netting on the other 6 waters involved routine monitoring to determine age and growth characteristics of salmon and splake stocked in the region.

With the coming of November, boats and gear will be stored for the winter, and efforts will move indoors to analyze the data collected from the field in 1995. Although some deer hunting will be included among hours spent at the desk, there's plenty of work to keep everyone busy well beyond the time the snow flies and ice fishing begins.

- Paul Johnson

Region A - Wildlife

With the assistance of the Engineering Division a dam was replaced on the Kennebunk Plainses WMA. This will create a 3-4 acre flowage which will benefit waterfowl and increase opportunity for trout fishing.

- Phil Bozenhard

Region A fishery staff have undertaken a new initiative intended to better inform and educate southern Maine anglers. This outreach effort will take the form of a biannual (twice a year) newsletter that will focus on fishery issues unique to southern Maine. The newsletter will convey information on water specific management, seasonal work plans, will include some Department wide information (dates, meetings, programs, etc.), and will address other topics of interest requested by anglers. Distribution will initially focus on sportmen clubs, tackle/bait shops, and local news media. The first edition should be available in January of 1996. Interested organizations and businesses should contact Region A Fishery Biologists at the Gray headquarters (657-3259).

- Francis Brautigam

Division C Fisheries

Fisheries biologists in the Machias office have begun to age lake trout using otoliths ("earbones"). Unlike many other fish, togue cannot be aged reliably using scale samples. Togue are slow-growing and there is a wide variation in age for individuals in a specific size range. For example, otoliths showed that a togue from 18-20" long may be as young as 5 or as old as 10. One "elderly" togue from Tunk Iaske, weighing 16 lb. 12 oz., was aged as approximately 30 years old!

Smallmouth bass are aged with scales through age 6, then otoliths must be used to get a reliable age on larger bass. Individuals from 15-20 inches in length may be as old as 15-20!

During the past year we utilized miniature electronic water temperature data loggers in 9 smallmouth bass waters. Hourly temperature readings were recorded from late April through early November. Survival of smallmouth bass is highly dependent on survival of first-year bass, with larger individuals experiencing higher survival. Water temperatures and food availability strongly influence growth of juvenile bass. Samples of young-of-